

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6467

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FOL MSG RECVD LISBON FROM OPORTO JUL 27 AND REPEATED FOR YOUR
INFO:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE OPORTO 0193

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJ: SHAKE-UP IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

1. ON JULY 13, 1978, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY
(PDC) HELD ITS FIRST "EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS" IN AVEIRO.
THE CONGRESS HAD BEEN BILLED BY ITS ORGANIZERS AS "THE FIRST
CONGRESS OF ANY PARTY CONVENED EXCLUSIVELY BY THE LOCAL MEMBER-
SHIP." THE ANNOUNCED AIM WAS TO REVIEW AND APPROVE CHANGES
IN THE PARTY LEADERSHIP AND STATUTES. THE NATIONAL DIREC-
TORATE OF THE PDC IN LISBON BRANDED THE CONGRESS AS ILLEGAL
AND THREATENED EXPULSION FOR PARTY MEMBERS WHO ATTENDED.

2. THE AVEIRO CONGRESS REACHED ITS ANNOUNCED OBJECTIVES.
ALL OF THE EXISTING LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY WAS VOTED OUT OF
OFFICE. THE ONLY EXCEPTION WAS PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO WHO REMAINED
ON AS PARTY PRESIDENT. THE CONGRESS ALSO ELIMINATED THE NATIONAL
DIRECTORATE AND THE POSITION OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND
REPLACED THEM WITH A NEW NATIONAL COUNCIL AND SECRETARIAT.
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LOCAL PRESS REPORT THAT THE PRESENT SECRETARY GENERAL WILL
CONTEST THESE CHANGES.

3. AT THE CLOSE OF THE PROCEEDINGS, PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO
MET WITH THE PRESS TO PRESENT THE PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS
OF THE CONGRESS. AMONG THE CONCLUSIONS DISCUSSED WAS THE ACCEPTANCE
BY THE CONGRESS OF THE NEED TO FORM AN ELECTORAL FRONT WITH

OTHER DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WHICH ACCEPT "A LIBERAL CHRISTIAN SOCIETY." ACCORDING TO AZEVEDO, THE PDC INITIALLY WILL APPROACH THE CDS WITH THIS PROPOSAL. LATER, THE PSD AND THE PPM WILL BE ASKED TO JOIN IN THE DISCUSSIONS. MIRN WOULD BE EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF ITS ANTI-DEMOCRATIC TENDENCIES.

4. COMMENT: THE PDC REMAINS WEAK IN THE NORTH. A FUNCTIONING PARTY APPARATUS EXISTS ONLY IN CERTAIN LIMITED, RURAL AREAS. INTRA-PARTY PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONGRESS WENT ALMOST UNNOTICED. LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE OF THE CONGRESS ITSELF WAS LIMITED. PDC SUPPORTERS CONTEND THAT THE PDC EMERGED FROM AVEIRO WITH A MANDATE FOR A MORE OPEN, DEMOCRATIC, AND AGGRESSIVE PARTY. BUT GIVEN LOCAL PARTY WEAKNESS, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE PDC WILL PLAY MORE THAN A MARGINAL POLITICAL ROLE FOR THE NEAR FUTURE. HARRINGTON UNQUOTE BLOOMFIELD

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